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Leading Through Chaos to Survive Market Instability Among Community and Technical Colleges in West Virginia

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Leading Through Chaos to Survive Market Instability Among Community and Technical Colleges in West Virginia

Davida Wolfe, Franklin University, DBA Student, October 5, 2018

Abstract

The problem is that West Virginia's community and technical colleges (CTCs) are experiencing a decline in enrollment. Therefore, higher education institutions are learning that they need to become more adaptable to the unpredictability and uncertainty when the institution encounters a decline in student enrollment. West Virginia's CTCs appear to have seen a decrease in student enrollment of 19.4 percent from 2012 to 2016 to a 4.7 percent from 2015 to 2016. Chaos Theory and the complexity can provide a unique perspective to understanding the present educational system, which includes the methods and approach to how each institution is ready to make a change and the dynamic system that is influencing those individuals to make the necessary adjustments and changes. The effects and impact of declining enrollment on the CTCs in West Virginia show how Chaos Theory is changing the environment in various West Virginia institutions, such as changes to courses offered and even the removal of programs due to the declining number of students enrolling and budget reductions. Enrollment expectations have created various forms of chaos within the institutions which involves the education establishment, stakeholders, students, employees, communities, and the economy. Furthermore, the institutions are working to increase the student enrollment through a variety of certification and changes to include specific programs to meet the needs of the local communities. Thereby achieving the requirements and needs of the institutions in West Virginia's CTCs can counteract the present chaotic environment and maintain the institution's mission, vision and values will they remain competitive and sustainable in the higher education industry. In particular, the relationship among the institutions and stakeholders requires the development of mutual trust to work together in resolving the issues based on fact and to gather all the necessary information needed to benefit the higher education institutions. Furthermore, CTCs, presidents, academic administrators, division chairs, employees, and students must understand the expectations of setting goals for the nine CTCs in West Virginia. The purpose of this study to primarily focus on the declining student enrollment at the nine CTCs in West Virginia. The mixed methodology study will provide a unique perspective from each participant to why they believe their institution is experiencing a decline in student enrollment. Therefore, how the institutions can adjust the various program and course schedules offered to the student population. During the mixed-methodology approach to understanding the driving force of declining student enrollment through in-depth interviews and focus groups with the presidents, administration, academic deans, and division chairs during the qualitative phase. The full-time and adjunct faculty from the nine CTCs in West Virginia conducted through online surveys will gain the perspective in why the student enrollment is declining in the quantitative phase on the study. In conclusion, the study will provide answers to the way the various CTCs in West Virginia can adapt to the declining student enrollment without negatively impacting the sustainability and competitive advantage in the higher education industry.

Research Question

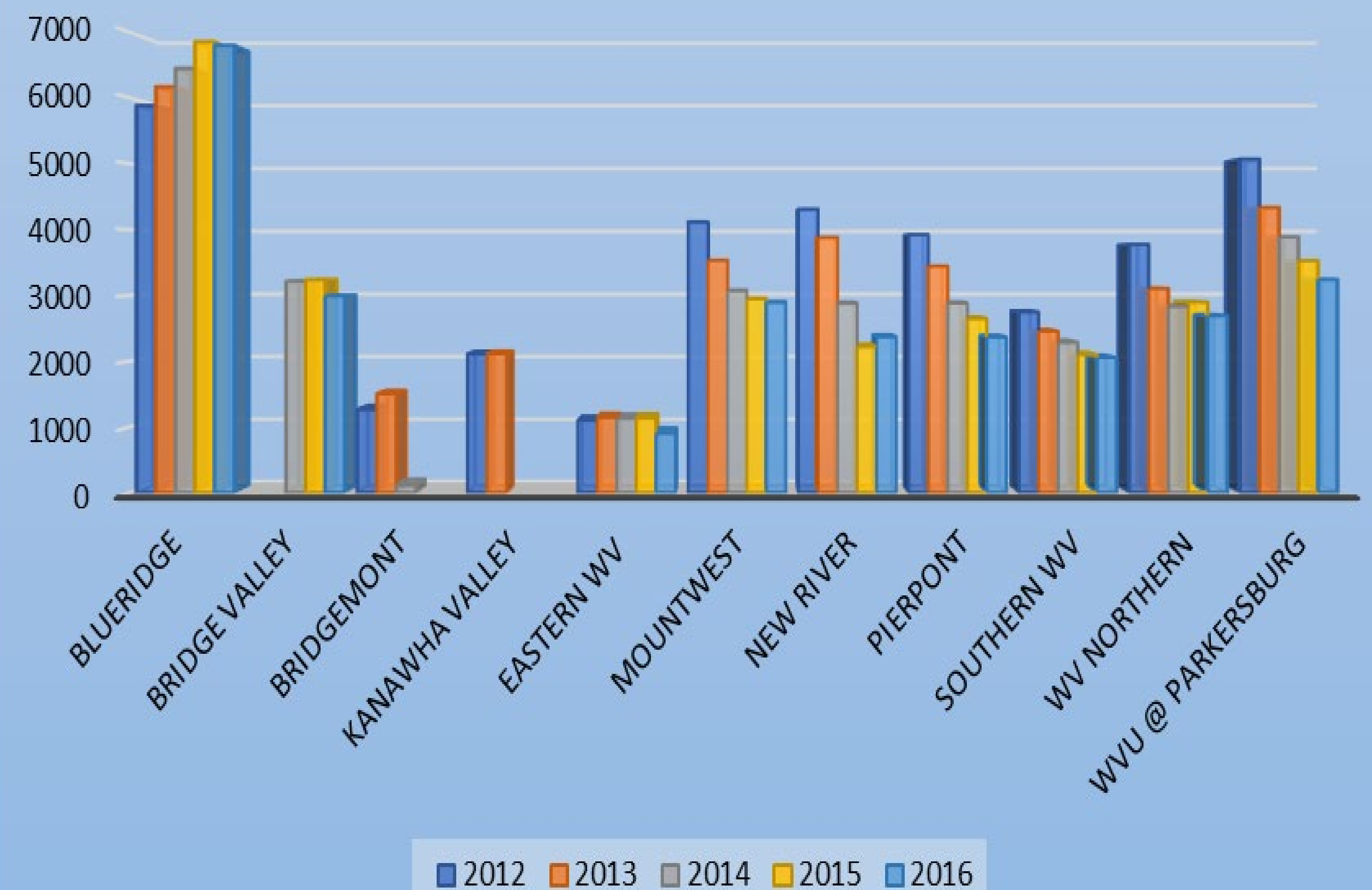
How can strategic thinking and innovation reverse the current decline in student enrollment at the community and technical colleges in West Virginia?

Hypothesis

HO: The lack of strategic thinking and innovation have caused a decrease in the student enrollment in West Virginia's community and technical colleges.

Ha: The current decline in student enrollment in West Virginia's community and technical colleges are unrelated to the strategic thinking and innovation.

Annual Headcount Enrollment, Academic Years 2012-2016



Appreciation and Thank You

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Credits

West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission, (2017). WV higher education report card. Retrieved from <http://www.wvhepc.edu/resources/reports-and-publications/> on June 6, 2018.

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